

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 IO-13 SSM-03 AID-05 SCA-01 /086 W

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O P 111350Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1743

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 093

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

COMPHIBRON SIX

COM THREE FOUR MAU

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 7395

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION SEPT. 11

REF: BEIRUT 7386

1. SUMMARY: LEBANESE POLITICIANS CONTINUE DAMASCUS
DISCUSSIONS AND PREPARE FOR CAIRO CONSULTATIONS. AL
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ENVOY KHOLI REPORTEDLY HAS NEW PEACE PLAN. PALESTINIAN

LEADERSHIP CONFLICT AS MODERATES PURSUE COMPROMISE WITH SYRIANS AND LEBANESE RIGHTISTS. SARKIS SAYS HE WILL BE INAUGURATED AND LIVE AT BAABDA PRESIDENTIAL PALACE. LIMITED GROUND OFFENSIVES REPORTED IN TRIPOLI AREA AND IN SOUTH NEAR JEZZINE. SHELLING CONTINUES IN BEIRUT BUT MUSEUM AREA LESS ACTIVE. VERY HEAVY FIGHTING REPORTED FROM SUBURBS. EXTENT OF ISRAELI PRESENCE IN SOUTH STILL NOT CLEAR.

PRESS REPORTS U.S. SENATE APPROVES \$35 MILLION IN AID TO LEBANON. END SUMMARY.

2. JUNBLATT UNDER PRESSURE. L'ORIENT-LE JOUR SAYS NEXT WEEK WILL BE "LEBANESE WEEK IN CAIRO," AS GEMAYEL, JUNBLATT AND ARAFAT SAID TO PLAN VISITS. JUNBLATT, HOWEVER, SAYS HE WILL NOT GO TO CAIRO UNTILL AFTER SARKIS INVESTITURE. GEMAYEL APPEARS TO JUNBLATT FOR DIALOGUE FOR THIRD TIME IN A WEEK, BUT JUNBLATT STILL REFUSING TALKS. SAEB SALAM, WHOSE DAMASCUS VISIT JUNBLATT HAS VIOLENTLY CRITICIZED, THREATENS TO "REVEAL THE TRUTH" ABOUT JUNBLATT. JUNBLATT SAW IBRAHIM QULAYLAT SEPT 10, AND MET WITH LAA COMMANDER KHATIB, AFTER WHICH LATTER CONTRADICTED RECENT REPORTS OF LAA-NM SPLIT.

3. DAMASCUS CONNECTIONS. AL MEDIATOR HASSAN SABRI KHOLI, DUE SEPT. 11 IN BEIRUT, SAID TO HAVE SUBMITTED NEW AL PEACE PLAN TO ASSAD SEPT. 10 IN DAMASCUS. LEFTIST RADIO HERE SAYS PLAN CONTAINS NOTHING NEW, MERELY MORE "NO-MAN'S LANDS" AND REOPENING OF BEIRUT AIRPORT AS FIRST STEPS. SUPREME ISLAMIC COUNCIL DELEGATION DUE RETURN SEPT. 11 FROM DAMASCUS. SAEB SALAM EXPECTED IN DAMASCUS SEPT. 12. THREE THEMES SAID EMPHASIZED DURING ALL DAMASCUS CONVERSATIONS: (1) REGULATION OF CRISIS, (2) SYRIAN/PALESTINIAN RELATIONS, AND (3) REOPENING OF DIALOGUE BETWEEN LEBANESE GROUPS AS PREPARATION FOR SARKIS TAKEOVER. WE UNDERSTAND ALL MAJOR CHRISTIAN VISITORS TO DAMASCUS IN PAST FEW DAYS HAVE TEMPORARILY AGREED TO CURRENT SYRIAN INTEREST IN POLITICAL SOLUTION. HOWEVER, RADIO AMCHIT (FRANGIE) SPEAKS OF NO CHOICE BUT FIGHT

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TO THE DEATH OR TOTAL VICTORY, DENOUNCES EGYPTIAN FM FAHMY FOR SUPPORTING PALESTINIANS, AND CALLS FOR RADICAL SOLUTION TO PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, REJECTING PRE-WAR SITUATION.

4. PALESTINIANS. LEADERSHIP CONFLICT WITHIN PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT AS MODERATES SEEK COMPROMISE AGREEMENT WITH SYRIANS AND LEBANESE RIGHT. AL SAMMUD,

OFFICIAL REJECTION FRONT PUBLICATION, CARRIES ARTICLE
ON ACRIMONIOUS HIGH-LEVEL MEETING WHICH WE
UNDERSTAND INCLUDED SHOUTING MATCH BETWEEN ARAFAT,
SUPPORTED BY FATAH SECURITY CHIEF ABU HASSAN, AND
ABDEL JAWAD SALEH, HARDLINING PLO EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE MEMBER. MODERATES FEEL CURRENT LESS
HAWKISH SYRIAN MOOD GIVES THEM ADVANTAGE. WE
UNDERSTAND MODERATES CONSIDER VISIT TO DAMASCUS OF
TWO PALESTINIAN ENVOYS VERY IMPORTANT, AND ARE
TRYING TO ASSOCIATE EGYPT WITH COMPROMISE EFFORTS.
ANOTHER AL SAMMUD ARTICLE LASHES OUT AT RECENT
PRAVDA ARTICLE CRITICIZING PALESTINIAN EXTREMISTS.
AL SAMMUD SAYS RECALL OF AMBASSADOR SOLDATOV SHOWS
SOVIET DESIRE TO AVOID EMBARRASSING SITUATION.

5. SARKIS. PRESS REPORTS SARKIS HAS DECIDED TO
ESTABLISH HIMSELF AT BAABDA PRESIDENTIAL PALACE.
REPAIRS OF SHELLED BUILDING NOW UNDERWAY. FRANGIE
SCHEDULED MEET SARKIS SEPT. 11. LEFTIST SOURCES
SAY SARKIS WILL VISIT WEST BEIRUT LEADERS NEXT WEEK.
PRESS SAYS SARKIS WILL VISIT DAMASCUS AGAIN BEFORE
SEPT. 23.

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O P 111350Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1744

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 094

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 7395

6. INTERNAL SECURITY FORCE. DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF
INTERNAL SECURITY FORCE HAS AGAIN ORDERED ALL
PERSONNEL ON LEAVE TO RETURN TO LEBANON BEFORE
SEPT. 20. SYRIANS REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD CHAMOUN
THEY ARE READY TO HELP RECONSTRUCT AND REEQUIP
THE ISF.

7. GROUND SITUATION. NORTH AND CENTER. UNSUCCESSFUL
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ZGHORTIAN OFFENSIVE REPORTED AGAINST ALMO SEPT. 10.
TRIPOLI UNDER HEAVY BOMBARDMENT. SYRIANS SAID TO
HAVE CUT ALL ACCESS BETWEEN TRIPOLI AND AKKAR.
ARTILLERY BATTLE SAID TO BE RAGING. AT URBAN CENTER
OF MONTEVERDE IN METN ON BEIT MERI ROAD. WE HAVE
NO CONFIRMATION. HEAVY BOMBARDMENTS CONTINUE AT
ALEY/KAHALE, BAABDATE/SALIMA AND SANNINE. IN THE
BEKAA, MAJOR HUSSEIN AWAD HAS REPORTEDLY JOINED
SYRIAN-DOMINATED "VANGUARD" FORCE AND IS SEEKING
RALLY OTHER LEBANESE ARMY ELEMENTS TO VANGUARDS.
EUROPEAN MILITARY OBSERVER REPORTS SYRIAN TROOPS
IN BEKAA GIVE NO APPEARANCE OF PREPARATION FOR NEW
OFFENSIVE.

8. BEIRUT AREA. MUSEUM AREA LESS ACTIVE AND SOME
LIMITED CROSSING BETWEEN ZONES HAS RESUMED. AL
FORCES STILL IN AREA BUT PRESS SAYS THEY ARE "LESS
VISIBLE." GENERAL GHONEIM CONTINUES CONTACTS TO
STOP FIGHTING IN AREA, MAINLY BETWEEN MURABITOUN
AND RIGHTISTS. ELSEWHERE IN CITY, SPORADIC SHELLING
OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS CONTINUES. IN SUBURBS, FIGHTING
REPORTED FROM CHIYAH/AIN EL-RUMMANEH, GALERIE
SAMAAN ARE, AND HADETH/LAYLAKI. UNCONFIRMED
REPORT OF TANK BATTLE ON OLD SIDON ROAD.

9. IN THE SOUTH. UPI CORRESPONDENT WHO VISITED

SOUTH LEBANON SEPT 9 TELLS US HE VISITED FIVE VILLAGES
REPORTED BY PRESS TO CONTAIN ISRAELI TROOPS AND FOUND
NONE. HE SAYS LOCAL CHRISTIAN MILITIAS ARE IN TOUCH
WITH ISRAELIS AND HAVE IMPLICIT UNDERSTANDING
ISRAELIS WILL HELP THEM IF PALESTINIANS ENTER AREA.
HOWEVER, WE UNDERSTAND FROM RELIABLE SOURCE THAT
ISRAELI FORCES HAVE LATELY BEEN IN SOME AREAS OF
SOUTH LEBANON TEMPORARILY. KATAEB RADIO SAYS
PALESTINIANS/LEFTISTS ATTACKED VILLAGE OF RIHANE
BETWEEN JEZZINE AND MARJEYOUN SEPT 10 BUT ATTACK
REPULSED BY NLP AND OTHER CHRISTIAN ELEMENTS.

10. U.S. AID TO LEBANON. PRESS REPORTS U.S. SENATE
APPROVAL OF \$35 MILLION IN AID TO LEBANON, INCLUDING
\$20 MILLION TO UN, \$5 MILLION TO RED CROSS AND \$10
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MILLION FOR OUTFITTING OF HOSPITAL SHIP "SANCTUARY"
FOR USE IN LEBANESE WATERS.
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